

Religious Department.

Rev. J. W. MALCOLM, Editor.

PULPIT MANNERS.

This subject occurred to us by listening to distinguished clergymen of different denominations who attract the multitude. It may be said of them that they are men of power, and succeed in doing about what they undertake, notwithstanding any imperfection in their manners. One loves to see them and hear them. They present live subjects, and treat them familiarly and practically, yet with an originality of thought and expression that carries conviction to the heart. Ministers without their attractions would be discarded for their defects. Success, like conversion, hides a multitude of sins, in a way of its own.

Mr. A. is a preacher in middle life, and of considerable distinction. From the general appearance of the man, and once hearing him, we judge that he is not disposed to be severe on worldly amusements, and would be more disturbed by earnest and devout piety among his people than by free and easy sociability. His movements in the pulpit seemed to indicate that he intended to do a pleasant thing and please the people, and so he did. Though he used brief notes, they did not embarrass him. He took a wide range, and developed many appropriate thoughts and expressions. "But his attitudes were remarkable; not awkward, indeed, but unmeaning and unimpressive. His clean, white, handkerchief played a prominent part. Being drawn from his pocket and unfolded before the audience at an early period in the discourse, it was first placed under the Bible, but was soon withdrawn, and passed over the speaker's mouth and nose, which were in perfect order without it, and then deposited elsewhere. Nearly every new proposition was heralded by some similar display of this useful article of outfit.

The intervals were filled up with various manipulations of the fingers, indicating nothing connected with the subject, such as adjusting the speaker's hair, feeling of his forehead or cheek, or what seemed particularly ridiculous, pressing his nasal organ on one side or the other with the fore finger in imitation of naughty boys on the street when they wish to express triumph or contempt. While we enjoyed the sermon, we could but wonder that some of the preacher's admirers had not corrected these little damaging habits by their kind suggestions. We next listened to a gentleman of another persuasion, whose thoughts were thoroughly evangelical, and whose language was superlatively beautiful. His gestures, too, were admirable, not only tallying with his thoughts, but often expressing them more forcibly than did his well-chosen words, which were sometimes so uttered as to be distinctly heard. Yet that grand discourse was wonderfully damaged by frequent nasal explosions which range through the house like a trumpet, showing by its clearness that that effort was a mere habit—and a very indelicate one—the condition of things in the speaker's breathing arrangements requiring nothing of the sort. How a gentleman of such high culture could fall into so disagreeable a practice is unaccountable. Could he see it as others do, he certainly would abandon it at once and forever. Let his friends advise him.

The use of a handkerchief as a spittoon on a sick-bed is sometimes very convenient, and even necessary; but such use of it in the pulpit is in bad taste, to say the least. But where, owing to the fastidiousness or neglect of trustees, a minister is forced to this or to soil a carpet, it may be a question which is the least objectionable? We are satisfied, however, that if the handkerchief cannot be brought into subjection to good taste in the pulpit it had better be left at home. The manners of the pulpit should be in harmony with the purity of its subject.—N. Y. Christian Advocate.

THE BIBLE QUESTION IN NEW YORK.—The question concerning the reading of the Bible at the opening of the public schools of Long Island City, New York, which has created so much excitement at various times for a year or more, was laid before the State Superintendent of education, Mr. Weaver, who decided against the right of the school authorities to enforce the reading of scriptures, or the attendance upon it. He states the matter thus:

"The claim by trustees of the right to enforce the attendance of pupils in the public schools upon religious exercises therein, has been frequently passed upon in this department by my predecessors in office and by myself, and it has uniformly been held that no such right legally existed. The object of the common school system of this state is to afford means of secular instruction to all children residing therein. For their religious training, the state does not provide, and with it does not interfere. No distinction is to be made between Christians, whether Protestants or Romanists, and the conscience of none can be legally violated. There is no authority in the law to use as a matter of right any portion of the regular school hours in conducting any religious exercises at the attendance of scholars is compulsory. On the other hand, there is nothing to prevent the reading of the scripture or the performance of other religious exercises by the teacher in the presence of such of the scholars as may attend voluntarily or by the direction of their parents or guardians, if it be done before the hour fixed for the opening of the school, or after the dismissal of the school.

The Oldest Religious Newspaper.

There has been laid on our table a bound copy of the first volume of "The Religious Remembrancer," a small quarto-four-page weekly paper, published by J. W. Scott, at No. 147 Chestnut street, Philadelphia. The first number was issued September 4, 1813. Its prospectus expresses regret that "no paper is published in this city, devoted to religion; no record of pious occurrences; no journal of religious intelligence; no medium for communicating the productions of pious minds to the public." This want the editor proposes to supply in the little journal then launched on the sea of popular favor, and which continued for at least a year, as the dingy and time-worn volume before us testifies.

The "Christian Observer" states the interesting fact that this paper was started in Philadelphia under the editorial management of Rev. Mr. Scott, by the excellent and revered Rev. Dr. Archibald Alexander, to whom the idea was suggested by Rev. Dr. J. H. Rice, who published "The Religious Monitor," at Richmond, Va., in 1815. The "Chillicothe Recorder" was published in 1814, and the Boston Recorder, in 1816.

RELIGION OF CHILDHOOD.—The false application of tests has led many to overlook real piety in little children. I would say to all who are brought into relation to children, do not expect too much from them. If you see them trying to repress an evil temper, and mourning over a departure from the truth, if the sight of vice is repulsive to them, and the sight of suffering touches the chords of sympathy, if they love to hear the story of the cross, and find delight in prayer, be satisfied for the present. Their frail natures, under ordinary circumstances, are capable of little more. There can be but the twilight of experience, at best; you must not anticipate the light of the noonday sun. The faintest germs of the new life can never ripen. They may be cramped and overlaid by the rubbish of worldliness, but the dew of God's grace shall water them, the quickening beams of his Spirit shall shine upon them; and by-and-by, the full-blown flower of Christian character shall appear: for "those that are planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God." "Train up a child in the way he should go," is the injunction God lays on us. It is the principle on which He himself is acting with his church. He is training up his children here. This is the true character of his dealings with them. The education of his saints is the object he has in view. It is training for the kingdom—it is education for eternity.

HE FEEL ASLEEP.—All things are yours, when you are Christ's, and death among them. This dreaded name is an article in the inventory of a Christian's possessions. When death becomes the property of a disciple, it is baptized and gets a new name. It has many different Christian names: For Paul, it was a departing to be with Christ; for Stephen, it was to fall asleep. It is remarkable that of all the Christian names of death, this one should be employed in the account of Stephen's martyrdom. Death in such a departing to be with Christ; for Stephen, it was to fall asleep.

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THE HOME ALTAR.—Is not family worship, even in professing Christian homes, far from being the rule? And where the habit does not prevail how much need there is for an increased reality in the services in which the family unitedly honor God. Brief, earnest, heartfelt prayer; joyous psalmody, and a portion of God's Word, read night and morning in every home—what an increase of godliness should we soon witness in our land. Surely if there be a scene on earth on which the eye of our Heavenly Father rests with delight, it must be the gathered household thus setting up the family altar. The godliness of the home thus evidenced must indeed be an element in the gratitude of a nation most acceptable to Him who "setteth the solitary in families."

THE FOUNTAIN HEAD.—When Rev. Drs. Spring, Emmons, and others of the fathers in the ministry, met in Boston in 1799, to consult about forming the Massachusetts Missionary Society, one of them proposed a Cent Society. The ladies entertained the idea favorably, talked and prayed about it in their meetings, which resulted in the formation of these auxiliary societies throughout the state, the members agreeing to give one cent a week.

A new evidence of the decay of Hinduism is afforded by the appearance of a new sect, a sort of Hindoo Protestantism. It maintains the worship of one Almighty God, forbids the killing of animals, and all violation of the laws and binds all its members to total abstinence. It appears to have sprung up spontaneously, at least not to be any direct and immediate result of missionary influence.

DEVISING LIBERAL THINGS.—Mr. Marquis Lord, who recently died in Hartford, bequeathed an estate valued at \$50,000, after the death of his wife to the American Bible Society, the American Tract Society, the Home Missionary Society, and Sunday-school Union.

To live in this world of opportunities, given but once, and to neglect them, is the most fearful fate that can befall a creature of eternal responsibilities.

Agricultural Department.

L. D. R. COLLINS, Editor.

WHEN SHOULD GRAIN BE CUT.

Older countries than ours, have given this question much attention, and public opinion there has settled down upon the fact that it should be some days before the grain is ripe.

It is not singular that such should be the case. There is a period when the grain of the wheat plant will yield the most flour. Cut earlier or later than this period, and it will yield less flour, and of a poorer quality.

Those persons who make sugar from the beet, have learned that if the root is harvested before it has thoroughly reached maturity, it does not yield a fair proportion of saccharine juices.

A peach must ripen perfectly on the tree, in order to be excellent. No system of culture, no art of man, or magic of manures, can make it a perfect one, unless it does so ripen.

On the contrary, most pears are ruined if allowed to ripen on the tree.

There may be other illustrations to show that it is not a singular thing that wheat, rye, barley and oats, should be harvested a few days before the kernels of grain are thoroughly ripened.

We have tested it sufficiently to thoroughly believe that such is the case. Our practice is, to cut the grain as soon as the earliest part of the crop has passed from the milky into the doughy state. By placing a kernel of the grain between the thumb nails and jamming it down, the true time of cutting can at once be ascertained. If the milk flows freely, it is too early; but if the kernel mashes down into a doughy consistency, showing a particle of milk, then is just the time.

Another very valuable point in cutting at this moment is, that the straw is much more valuable than when left standing longer. There is no necessity to let it lay to cure, but it should be at once tied up, and the bundles set in stacks. If the stacks are then covered with caps, grain and straw will come to perfection.

Those who have abundant experience in the matter, state that the advantages of this mode of harvesting are, the grain is heavier, sweeter, and whiter; there is no shattered grain, and the straw is so much better that this alone would make it advisable to cut early.

The most careful attention has been given to this subject in England. There indeed, they can afford expensive experiments. On some estates, where the proprietor has an annual income of some \$100,000, and has a desire to be useful to the world, such experiments have been made as to settle many questions in regard to the cultivation of crops. This question of the best time of harvesting grain, was one of them.

In the second volume of British Husbandry, it is said,—"Taking all things into consideration, it seems to be the most prudent plan to have the grain cut before it is fully ripe; but in this a medium course should be adopted: for although grain, if allowed to become too ripe, assumes a dull, husky hue in the sample, yet if not ripened enough it shrivels in the drying."

Another authority states that "grain reaped eight days before ripening has the berries larger, fuller, and finer."

An experienced Pennsylvania farmer states that he always cuts his oats while the straw is green. He learned this by accident. His hay crop was short and he cut his oats before ripening, but left a strip for ripening for seed. Upon threshing he was surprised to find the early cut yielding as much and as plump grain as that which stood until it was ripe, while the straw was incomparably better.

Let us test for ourselves during the coming harvest. It might be interesting to some to state reasons why the grain is better, cut early. They are exceedingly interesting, but may come more properly at another time perhaps, when farm duties are less pressing.—E.

BEST CONSTRUCTION OF STANCHIONS.—The latest improvement upon stanchions with the dairymen in this section, is to build them thus: Make the stanchions each side of the neck six inches wide; frame in a board between the stanchions about three-fourths of an inch forward of the stanchions, wide enough to fill the space except four inches—leave a space of two inches between the board and stanchions; the movable stanchion will fall behind the board and leave room for the cow to put in her head. When the movable stanchion is closed the whole space is closed except the two inches space between the stanchions and fixed board, which space is necessary to make room for the cow to put her head in—also that the cow behind you, when milking, will sometimes kick if she cannot see you.

MILK FOR HENS.—A gentleman who has tried it says he succeeds in getting more eggs from his hens than his neighbors, and particularly in cold weather, and this, too, without any very good or warm accommodations. He does it by giving his fowls an ample allowance of skimmed milk. His fowls, which were hatched the last of May, commenced laying in October and have been at it ever since, to the astonishment, if not the envy, of his neighbors. He gives no scraps, no meat, but plenty of grain, ground and unground, plenty of oyster shells pounded, and a paiful of skimmed milk every day. Farmers can easily try the milk feed, and if they will not forget to give them, in addition, all the grain they will eat, we doubt not, but that they will have a large increase of eggs.

THE BEST WAY TO GRIND SCYTHES.

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CURIOSITIES OF ANIMAL LIFE.—There

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An experienced Pennsylvania farmer states that he always cuts his oats while the straw is green. He learned this by accident. His hay crop was short and he cut his oats before ripening, but left a strip for ripening for seed. Upon threshing he was surprised to find the early cut yielding as much and as plump grain as that which stood until it was ripe, while the straw was incomparably better.

Let us test for ourselves during the coming harvest. It might be interesting to some to state reasons why the grain is better, cut early. They are exceedingly interesting, but may come more properly at another time perhaps, when farm duties are less pressing.—E.

BEST CONSTRUCTION OF STANCHIONS.—The latest improvement upon stanchions with the dairymen in this section, is to build them thus: Make the stanchions each side of the neck six inches wide; frame in a board between the stanchions about three-fourths of an inch forward of the stanchions, wide enough to fill the space except four inches—leave a space of two inches between the board and stanchions; the movable stanchion will fall behind the board and leave room for the cow to put in her head. When the movable stanchion is closed the whole space is closed except the two inches space between the stanchions and fixed board, which space is necessary to make room for the cow to put her head in—also that the cow behind you, when milking, will sometimes kick if she cannot see you.

MILK FOR HENS.—A gentleman who has tried it says he succeeds in getting more eggs from his hens than his neighbors, and particularly in cold weather, and this, too, without any very good or warm accommodations. He does it by giving his fowls an ample allowance of skimmed milk. His fowls, which were hatched the last of May, commenced laying in October and have been at it ever since, to the astonishment, if not the envy, of his neighbors. He gives no scraps, no meat, but plenty of grain, ground and unground, plenty of oyster shells pounded, and a paiful of skimmed milk every day. Farmers can easily try the milk feed, and if they will not forget to give them, in addition, all the grain they will eat, we doubt not, but that they will have a large increase of eggs.